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RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY 5331
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PRIORITY 1429
RUEHCI/AMCONSUL KOLKATA PRIORITY 3458
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RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC PRIORITY
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC PRIORITY
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SUBJECT: NEPAL: AVIAN INFLUENZA UPDATE FOR MAY

REF: KATHMANDU 760

No AI Human or Bird Cases Reported in Nepal

11. (SBU) A/DCM chaired post's avian influenza (AI) working group on May 9. Post Medical Officer reported that there have been no confirmed cases of AI in Nepal, in spite of recent confirmed cases in surrounding countries. Post is actively monitoring the situation and continuing awareness efforts.

Government Launches National AI Project

12. (U) On May 3 the Government of Nepal (GON) launched a National Avian Influenza Control Project. The 18.2 million dollar project will be funded through a World Bank grant. The overall objectives of the project are to minimize the threat AI poses to human beings in Nepal by controlling AI infections in birds, especially in domestic poultry, and preparing for, controlling, and responding to possible human infections, especially an influenza epidemic and related emergencies. The objectives will be achieved through three types of interventions: (1) prevention; (2) preparedness and planning; and (3) response and containment. If successful, the proposed project will reduce the burden of disease in animals and the consequent economic losses. It will also lower the risk of human infection and the loss of productivity attributable to human infections in Nepal and other neighboring countries. The project implementation period is four and a half years. The project has four components: (a) animal health; (b) human health; (c) communication; and (d) project management. The project will fall under the umbrella of the Central Natural Disaster Relief Committee which the Home Secretary chairs. There will be two main implementing agencies - the Department of Livestock Services in the Ministry of Agriculture and the Department of Health Services in the Ministry of Health.

Comment

13. (SBU) The magnitude of the World Bank Project will present new challenges for the Government of Nepal (GON). The sheer size of the project will likely overwhelm the existing infrastructure and test the capacity of the Government Departments charged with implementing the project. USAID

will provide the GON as much technical assistance as possible.
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